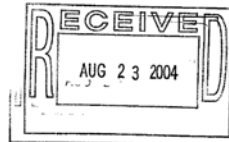


Comment Letter I107**I107**

August 18, 2004

Mr. Joe Petrillo
Chair
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L St., Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814



Dear Mr. Petrillo:

This letter presents comments on the California High Speed Rail Draft Program EIR/EIS.

The DEIR/S is flawed because it omits the possibility of an Altamont Pass alignment as an alternative to tunneling through the more mountainous Mt. Hamilton and Pacheco Pass areas to connect the Central Valley to the Bay Area. As you may know, the Altamont Pass alignment was the recommended preferred alignment of the Intercity High Speed Rail Commission, the predecessor to the California High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA).

An Altamont Pass alignment would follow the existing I-580/I-680 corridor, with the following potential benefits:

1. No impact on Henry Coe State Park, the second largest state park in California, including its pristine Orestimba Wilderness.
2. Less overall growth inducement in wilderness and undeveloped areas
3. Less impact on wetlands
4. Faster Los Angeles-San Francisco travel times
5. Service to over 1 million East Bay and Northern Central Valley residents in Phase I of the project.
6. Traffic congestion relief on I-80 and I-580/I-680
7. Much faster travel times between the Bay Area and Sacramento
8. Cost savings of up to \$2 billion, according to documents in the DEIR/S record.

This Program DEIR/S should not be used to decide which alignment to use. Rather, a new EIR/S should fully explore an Altamont Pass alignment, providing a complete and careful comparison to other alignment options for public comment.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,


D. E. Hasselmann
519 S. Nardo Avenue
Solana Beach CA 92075

I107-1



CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Response to Comments of D.E. Hasselmann, August 18, 2004 (Letter I107)

I107-1

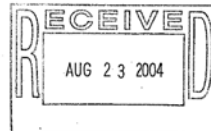
Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I108**I108**

Dr. Mha Atma S. Khalsa
Martha Oaklander
1536 Crest Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90035

August 19, 2004

Mr. Joe Petrillo, Chair
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L St., Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814



Dear Mr. Petrillo,

As concerned California residents and taxpayer, we thank you for considering our comments on the California High Speed Rail Draft Program EIR/EIS.

The DEIR/S is flawed because it omits the possibility of an Altamont Pass alignment as an alternative to tunneling through the more mountainous Mt. Hamilton and Pacheco Pass areas to connect the Central Valley to the Bay Area. As you may know, the Altamont Pass alignment was the recommended preferred alignment of the Intercity High Speed Rail Commission, the predecessor to the California High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA).

An Altamont Pass alignment would follow the existing I-580/I-680 corridor, with the following potential benefits:

- No impact on Henry Coe State Park, the second largest state park in California, including its pristine Orestimba Wilderness
- Less overall growth inducement in wilderness and undeveloped areas
- Less impact on wetlands
- Faster Los Angeles-San Francisco travel times
- Service to over 1 million East Bay and Northern Central Valley residents in Phase I of the project.
- Traffic congestion relief on I-80 and I-580/I-680
- Much faster travel times between the Bay Area and Sacramento
- Cost savings of up to \$2 billion, according to documents in the DEIR/S record.

This Program DEIR/S should not be used to decide which alignment to use. Rather, a new EIR/S should fully explore an Altamont Pass alignment, providing a complete and careful comparison to other alignment options for public comment.

Most sincerely,

Dr. Mha Atma S. Khalsa

Martha Oaklander

I108-1

Response to Comments of Mha Atma Khalsa and Martha Oaklander, August 19, 2004 (Letter I108)

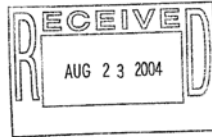
I108-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I109**I109**

August 19, 2004

Mr. Joe Petrillo
Chair
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 I. St., Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814



Subject: California High Speed Rail Draft Program EIR/EIS

Dear Mr. Petrillo:

I find the DEIR/S flawed because it omits the possibility of an Altamont Pass alignment as an alternative to tunneling through the more mountainous Mt. Hamilton and Pacheco Pass areas to connect the Central Valley to the Bay Area. As you may know, the Altamont Pass alignment was the recommended preferred alignment of the Intercity High Speed Rail Commission, the predecessor to the California High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA).

It is my understanding that an Altamont Pass alignment would follow the existing I-580/I-680 corridor, with the following potential benefits:

1. No impact on Henry Coe State Park, the second largest state park in California, including its pristine Orestimba Wilderness.
2. Less overall growth inducement in wilderness and undeveloped areas.
3. Less impact on wetlands
4. Faster Los Angeles-San Francisco travel times
5. Service to over 1 million East Bay and Northern Central Valley residents in Phase I of the project.
6. Traffic congestion relief on I-80 and I-580/I-680
7. Much faster travel times between the Bay Area and Sacramento
8. Cost savings of up to \$2 billion, according to documents in the DEIR/S record.

This Program DEIR/S should not be used to select an alignment. Rather, there should be a new EIR/S which fully explores an Altamont Pass alignment, providing a complete and careful comparison to other alignment options for public comment.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Rudy Ramp
370A California Ave.
Arcata, CA 95521

I109-1

Response to Comments of Rudy Ramp, August 19, 2004 (Letter I109)

I109-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I110

I110

FROM THE DESK OF
A.E. (TONY) SALIERNO

TO: Calif. High-Speed Rail Authority
Board of Directors

I support high-speed rail,
"the only way to fly"
most of Europe and other
parts of the world have found
that out a long time ago.
We must get going now!
And of course the route should
follow population centers along
high way 99 including Tulare
County. Sincerely
Tony Salerno
Chairman.

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MORTGAGE
CORPORATION
"Loans for Homes"
1800 S. Central Avenue • P.O. Box 3328 • Visalia, California 93278-3328
Telephone (209) 734-2071 • FAX (209) 734-3640

I110-1

I110-2



CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**

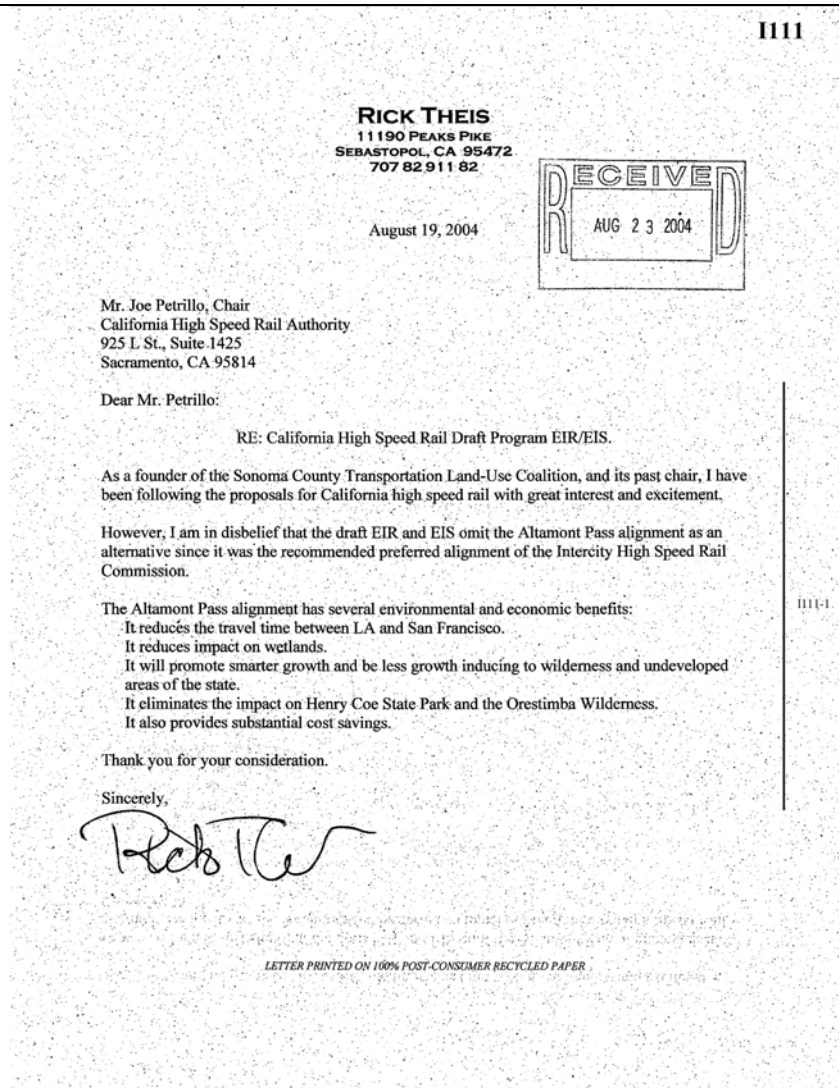
Response to Comments of A. E. (Tony) Salierno, August 23, 2004 (Letter I110)

I110-1

Acknowledged.

I110-2

Please see standard response 6.15.4.

Comment Letter I111

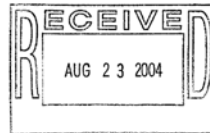
Response to Comments of Rick Theis, August 19, 2004 (Letter I111)

I111-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I112**I112**

August 22, 2004



California High-Speed Rail Authority
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax (916) 322-0827

I am concerned about the routes for a proposed high-speed rail system that would connect the Bay Area with Los Angeles. Unfortunately, the draft environmental impact report (DEIR) for this project fails to consider all of the potential routes, nor does it address the significant and permanent negative environmental consequences of some of the routes that are considered.

I respectfully request that the California High-Speed Rail Authority revise and recirculate the DEIR so that it fully considers all of the environmental impacts of all of the possible routes for the high-speed rail, including full consideration of the Altamont Pass Alternative.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Bess Touma
P.O. Box 1583
El Granada, CA 94018
(650) 712-0773 home
(650) 712-0396 fax
(415) 759-3461 work
etouma@attbi.com

I112-1



CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**

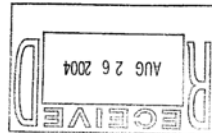
Response to Comments of Bess Touma, August 22, 2004 (Letter I112)

I112-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I113

I113



August 24, 2004

Joseph Petrillo, Chair
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, #1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Draft Environmental Report (DEIR)

Dear Mr. Petrillo:

I am writing as a concerned citizen who was very much anticipating your report on the feasibility of high-speed rail between Northern and Southern California. As soon as we Americans have an opportunity to visit Europe and ride their trains, many of us wish that we had such a rail system in the U.S. Taking the TGV from Marseille to Paris ranks as my most enjoyable journey from point A to B.

Unfortunately, there seems to have been a drastic change between this Authority and the previous Commission, which was recommending the Altamont alignment. In the early 90s, a Cal-Speed UC Berkeley and an independent French study determined that Altamont was the best route.

The Diablo route seems particularly unsuited for development of high-speed rail transit for the obvious reasons that it would compromise an undeveloped wilderness area of California that is home to our second largest state park (Henry W. Coe), be extremely costly to implement (tunneling through fault-line terrain), and not serve even the population that would be addressed by the Pacheco Pass route. This highly unacceptable route certainly makes the alternate, but also unacceptable Pacheco Pass route look good by comparison.

An Altamont route would serve ten times more people at one-tenth the cost and with less environmental impact than the Pacheco Pass route. Elevated rail lines could follow existing freeway corridors. If even a fraction of the commuters was diverted from their cars to trains entering Silicon Valley at the mid-Peninsula, there would be guaranteed revenue (and much less air pollution). The Altamont route serves San Joaquin Valley and Tri-Valley cities, such as Merced, Turlock, Modesto, Manteca, Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin, San Ramon, and Fremont, that would be by-passed by the Pacheco Pass route. Altamont directly connects Sacramento and Stockton to the Bay Area, serving an additional three million people. The Pacheco Pass route would take longer than the current Capitol Corridor or ACE trains, hardly an incentive for commuters to abandon their cars.

A high-speed Dumbarton Bridge crossing could be coordinated with the proposed CalTrains bridge construction over the existing rail right-of-way. According to Patrick Moore, High Speed Rail Watch Committee of the Sierra Club (Loma Prieta chapter), "The Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Coastal Conservancy, and Save the Bay all indicated at a meeting in the Authority Chair's office on April 8, 2004, that they have no objections to a study of the Altamont route alternative including a bay crossing because of the concern to wilderness damage."

There is a discrepancy between the 1999 cost analysis of a Dumbarton Bridge crossing of \$300 million versus the later estimated bridge costs of \$1.1 to \$1.4 billion (with \$1.4 billion in mitigation costs) used to dismiss the Altamont alignment, even though it was presented by the same firm. How can the construction of considerably longer routes through either the Pacheco Pass or the Diablo Range be less costly in terms of construction, operation, and long-term maintenance? Of course, since taxpayers' money is at stake here, we need to have the rail crossing coordinated with CalTrains for a further savings. The dismissal of Altamont for environmental and cost concerns is highly questionable.

As for opening up the Pacheco Pass route to high-speed rail, there is the obvious potential development of Silicon Valley commuter cities on existing agricultural land. If the proposed rail station is the dairy farm near Santa Nella, what will the area look like in ten years? Isn't the intent of high-speed rail to serve existing population centers, not create more sprawl? Who benefits from opening up new population centers when existing ones are not being served? Are there any special interests that would benefit at the expense of the taxpayers of California? Can we be ensured of complete disclosure of any special interests? How much does such an EIR as the one presented cost taxpayers? Would banks invest in the Pacheco Pass route versus the Altamont as a good investment if potential real estate development were excluded from consideration?

Finally, even if populations served, additional cost, and our environment were not considered, Altamont has faster running times between San Francisco and Los Angeles than Pacheco or Diablo. Unless the Altamont alignment is the route, I don't think that high-speed rail will benefit Californians, so I'll be content to take a plane to Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

Candice Basham

Sunnyvale, CA

cc: Representative Anna Eshoo
Representative Mike Honda
Representative Zoe Lofgren
Representative Richard Pombo

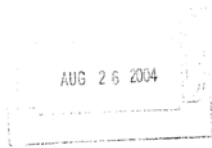
I113-1
cont.

I113-1

Response to Comments of Candice Basham, August 24, 2004 (Letter I113)

I113-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I114**I114**

65 Walnut Avenue
Atherton CA 94027
August 25, 2004

California High-Speed
Rail Authority
925 'L' Street
Sacramento, Calif 95814

Dear Sir:

I am opposed to "The High-Speed
Rail" running through Atherton and
neighboring cities. This is a Residential,
~~not~~ Industrial or Commercial Area.

Besides the extra noise, it is
totally unfair for property owners to
have to let go of their land. I
support considering the Altamont Route.

Sincerely

Jackie Leonard-Bennett

I114-1

I114-2

Response to Comments of Jackie Leonard-Dimmick, August 26, 2004 (Letter I114)

I114-1

Acknowledged.

I114-2

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I115**I115**

4811 W. Ceres Court
Visalia, CA 93291
(559)735-0274
lwilla@comcast.net

August 23, 2004

California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Project Comment

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am thrilled at the prospect of a highspeed rail system for California! Having lived on the East Coast, I am aware of the incredible impact of a good mass transit system. It's hard to fathom all the positive effects on our state: less road congestion, faster city-to-city commute times, perhaps improved air quality, a boost for tourism and a better sense of community for the whole state of California.

From my perspective, I favor the eastern (Union Pacific) route through the Central Valley with a station in Visalia. I believe the Highspeed Rail System could become invaluable at linking the Valley towns to the metropolitan areas, and also offer a wonderful alternative to accessing eastern recreation areas like Yosemite, Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks.

I recently attended your townhall meeting in Visalia, and was surprised at how few people even know of this project. I'm doing my part to spread the word and support the project, and I urge you to please continue – and increase – your marketing work on the project.

Please forge ahead with this ambitious plan, and let me know how I can help!

Respectfully,

Laura H. Williams

I115-1

I115-2



CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Response to Comments of Laura H. Williams, August 23, 2004 (Letter I115)

I115-1

Acknowledged.

I115-2

Please see standard response 6.21.1 and standard response 6.15.4.

Comment Letter I116**I116**

John D. Carpenter
905 W. Middlefield Road, #915
Mountain View, Ca 94043

24 August 2004

Attn: California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814



To Those It May Concern:

As this document serves to fulfill legal requirements for Federal funding of the California High Speed Rail (CA HSR), and is based upon ongoing documents for the Program, my comments for this document would only be general in scope.

There needs to be more of a scope statement so that people who may be commenting on this would not be confused. It seems to me that at this Program level, we are talking about Corridors that may be needed for running high speed trains of the sort that are to provide scheduled high speed rail service and nothing else. So the input of this process should be a selection of viable corridors and the product of this should be a subset of these corridors that can be carried over to the various Project levels.

1. Corridors should be represented as a swath where routes and then alignments can be located and should not look like a particular alignment. For example, the Pacheco Pass would be a corridor about 5 to 10 miles wide and thus would allow for choosing an route within the median of CA-152 as well as to being along one side of Henry Miller Road. Another example would be the East Bay that is so developed that the corridor would be represented as being split in two with each split being no wider than one of the two possible routes. This should allow people who are concerned about environmental issues to realize that sensitive areas can be avoided to the greatest extent possible if the swath provides for several route options or consider mitigations if the swath is too narrow as to be more like a singular route option.

2. These Corridors should be those necessary to provide rail service that not only takes demand away from the highway but also from airline services. It should be clear that addressing proposed rail service that only reduces the demand from the highway is outside of the scope of this Program even though this may be funded from either the approximately \$1 billion of residuals of the CA HSR ballot measure and/or from CA HSR operational proceeds. For example, the accumulation of corridors to provide rail service between San Jose and Los Angeles would be within the scope, but any corridor that serves only to best provide service between the San Francisco and Sacramento would be outside the scope. The latter corridor, nevertheless, can be developed at a Project level in its own right and would be eligible to use the resources of the CA HSR measure or proceeds.

3. It would be good for Corridor evaluations to have concurrences with those who have designed and/or are operating existing and successful high-speed rail systems such as in Germany, France, and Japan. These should be in writing with CA HSR Authority responses in an appendix to this Program document. An important item for concurrences is, for example, the dropping of the Altamont Corridor (Would these other entities do the same thing if they had the same type of problem?).

I116-2

Respectfully,

John D. Carpenter

I116-1

Response to Comments of John D. Carpenter, August 24, 2004 (Letter I116)

I116-1

As stated on page S-1 of the Draft Program EIR/EIS this document, “analyzes a proposed HST Alternative and compares it with a No Project/No Action (No Project) Alternative and a Modal Alternative (potential improvements to the highways and airports serving the same intercity travel demand as the HST Alternative).” The draft goes on to note that “the Authority and the FRA may select a preferred HST corridor/alignment, general station locations, and recommended mitigation strategies, and may recommend further measures to consider in more detail at the project level to avoid and minimize potential adverse environmental impacts.” Therefore, part of the outcome of this process may be the selection of corridors to be carried over to the project specific level.

The co-lead agencies disagree with the assertion that corridors should be represented as a “swath” and “should not look like a particular alignment”. In order to evaluate potential environmental impacts, and to make travel time and cost assumptions, conceptual alignments had to be developed for both the HST and Modal Alternatives – these are the alignments depicted at a conceptual level of detail in the Draft Program EIR/EIS. Typical sections were also developed for these alignments. For most of the HST system and for the Modal Alternative the alignments are largely constrained to existing transportation alignments and are either in or immediately adjacent to existing transportation right-of-way. The manner in which the alignments are presented in the Draft Program EIR/EIS is clearly conceptual in level of detail, however enough detail is provided to support input from agencies and the public.

The purpose and need of the HST system is clearly stated in Chapter 1 of the Draft Program EIR/EIS (pages 1-3 & 1-4). While markets such as Sacramento to San Francisco, Fresno to San Francisco, and Los Angeles to San Diego are currently primarily served by the automobile, these are intercity markets between major metropolitan

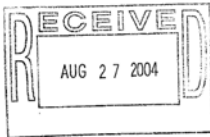
areas where HST services could provide an attractive alternative to the automobile. Nevertheless, the HST service would compliment and compete with both the automobile and air transportation for California’s intercity markets, and ridership forecasts have shown that the market between the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles has the highest potential ridership and revenue for the HST service.

I116-2

The Authority’s Business Plan was peer reviewed by SNCF, Japan Railway Technical Services, and DE Consult (the consulting branch of the German Railways). Please see standard response 2.18.1 in regards to the Altamont Corridor.

Comment Letter I117

I117



139 Hamilton Ave.
Mountain View, CA 94043-4204

August 24, 2004

Attn: California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Sirs

**Comment on the omission of the Altamont Pass route from the
EIR/EIS study**

Why not the Altamont Pass route?

I have lived now in the Bay Area for 28 years and have been very fortunate to enjoy the beauty of this part of California. I especially love that magnificent part of the Diablo Range between Livermore and Pacheco Pass. This is truly unspoiled country with only the small Mt. Hamilton road going all the way through.

I have hiked Sunol Regional Wilderness, Joseph D. Grant County Park and most of all Henry Coe State Park. I get there at least three times a year, twice day hiking and once backpacking, often going into the Orestimba Wilderness - which is in danger of being destroyed. My hiking days will soon be over but I hope that others will be able to enjoy this wonderful wilderness for all time. Over the years I have put some money where my heart is, contributing several thousand dollars to The Nature Conservancy's Mt. Hamilton project to protect this area.

I am all in favor of High Speed Rail in California, but not at the expense of ruining this unique area for all time. The Altamont Pass is the obvious way over the hills to the Bay Area. The Highway and railway have sensibly taken that route. The terrain is very much easier than farther south and adding High Speed Rail there would not be much of an eyesore. The cost would be many millions less than the Henry Coe or Pacheco Pass routes.

It is a purely political decision to ignore the Altamont Pass route. The politics say "Hide the facts, It's got to go through San Jose regardless, so don't get data to show otherwise". I am 100% against this project unless there is going to be a fair assessment of the Altamont Pass route.

I see in table 2.6-6 (Page 2-45) of the "California High-Speed Train Program EIR/EIS Alternatives" that the Merced Southern alignment (Central Valley Portion of San Jose-Merced section for Diablo Range options) was eliminated for just one reason (environmental), because of "San Luis National Wildlife Refuge impacts". Why was the surface route through Henry Coe State Park not eliminated for the same reason?

Sincerely

M H R Donald

Martin H. R. Donald

I117-1

I117-1

2

Response to Comments of Martin H. R. Donald, August 24, 2004 (Letter I117)

I117-1

Please see standard response 6.3.1.